



Dyken Pond-erings

Newsletter of the Friends of the Dyken Pond Center

Issue 116

Promoting environmental awareness in people of all ages

Spring 2013

Dyken Pond Environmental
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Wildlife Monitoring around the Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center

By Daniel Vitro

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Greetings Friends of Dyken Pond, my name is Daniel Vitro. I am a student at the State University of New York SUNY Cobleskill. My major is wildlife management and I have completed all of my academic requirements for my degree. The final task for my degree program is my internship at the Dyken Pond Environmental Center. I started my internship at the Center on January 7th and I'm gaining a great amount of knowledge on animal tracking and teaching. Over the past two months, I've conducted weekly hikes around Dyken Pond Center determining where animals may have been and where they are moving. I look for any signs of their presence from scat to their tracks in the snow, then mark the location of that sign on a GPS device and record my findings on animal tracking data sheets. Signs of gray and red fox, American mink, long-tailed and short-tailed weasel, fisher, white tailed deer, porcupine, coyote, pileated woodpecker and red squirrel

have been found in my survey. A couple of weeks ago I found a live porcupine sleeping in a hemlock tree only thirty yards away from the otter creek/long hiking trail. Not only am I hiking on the trails, Lisa and I also have a trail camera set up to take pictures of animals moving around Dyken Pond. However, after several frustrating attempts we did not have one single animal come into contact with the camera. So we decided to lure animals to our camera with a knuckle bone provided to us by the Grand Union in Hoosick Falls. A couple of weeks have passed and no carnivore has taken a bite out of our little treat I set out for them. I will continue to monitor animal movement at Dyken Pond for the rest of my time as an intern and hopefully find many more fascinating sign.

Camera Trap Summary: Observing fisher behavior from March 3rd to the 7th

By Daniel R. Vitro

The use of the camera trap over the past several weeks has had little success until a big male fisher came to inspect a knuckle bone I had placed near long trail on March 1st at 10:30 a.m. The goal of this experiment was to capture coyotes or other predators on the trail camera with a baited knuckle bone and observe their behavior through the pictures that were taken.

On Sunday March 3rd at 5:37 a.m., the fisher was very cautious approaching the bait taking small nibbles on the bone. He stayed for only two minutes then left. During the morning that same day at 7:47 a.m. the male fisher still acts a little cautious and takes only small nibbles at the bone. He only stays for 20 to 30 seconds and runs off due to some disturbance near him.

Monday, March 4th at 2:33 a.m., the big male comes back to the site but only stays for a few seconds because the site had been disturbed by someone's dog. Six hours later at 8:15 a.m. on that same day, the fisher comes back to the site to inspect the damage done by the dog in a cautious manner and takes a couple of nibbles from the bone before leaving a minute later. Later that same night at 6:46 p.m. to inspect the area again making sure the area wasn't disturbed again. The animal only stayed for a couple of minutes to nibble on the bait and leaves at 6:48 p.m.

He comes back to the site on Tuesday, March 5th at 4:33 a.m.; on that morning, the behavior of our big male began to unfold as I observed and analyzed the pictures from the camera trap. As I was observing the pictures, its feeding behavior intrigued me. The fisher began to feed on the left side of the bait and gradually work his way to the right side. Afterwards he began to rip away bits of meat off with his sharp teeth and claws; pulling and tugging away at the bottom part of the bone in an aggressive manner for 15 to 20 minutes. I was

so thrilled to finally capture and analyze the behavior of this amazing animal. During that time frame, I noticed that he pauses and goes back to eating and keeps repeating this pattern. This behavior usually means the animal is keeping himself alert to be sure no one else comes to steal his early morning breakfast. At 4:55 a.m. he leaves real briefly for a couple of seconds and then comes back to rip apart the knuckle bone, but this time he goes for the wire; trying to loosen the meat from tree I had tied it around. The knuckle bone was tied around electrical wire to prevent the animal from breaking the piece of meat off the wire and running away with it. His impulsive behavior to rip the bone off the tree was something exciting to see in the photos. He continues this behavior for five minutes and at 5:00 a.m., he continues to eat the meat for a minute and leaves.

Wednesday, March 6th, 4:06 a.m., the male comes back but approaches the bone cautiously just like it did a couple of nights before I saw its true colors unleashed. Later that same day at 4:17 p.m. a new visitor came to the camera. This time it was a female fisher. She only stayed for a few seconds because she probably caught the male fishers scent around the bone and then leaves.

Thursday, March 7th at 5:41 a.m., our male fisher came back and displayed the same wild behavior it had exhibited a couple of nights ago, but he swings the bait around the tree to prevent the camera from capturing his behavior. It was out of view for a few minutes then he pulls the piece of meat back around and continues to chew his way into the meat. Ten to fifteen minutes later at 5:56 a.m., he stops and stands up straight; acting in an alert manner. The fisher stayed for only a minute at the site then left after he heard or saw whatever had spooked him. I was happy to capture an animal on a camera trap for the first time. It was an amazing experience to analyze the behavior of a fisher through the photographs taken by the camera trap. I hope I get to capture more pictures on the camera within the following weeks at Dyken Pond.

Nature Notes



- Fisher is one of the largest members of the weasel family.
- Male fishers are much larger than females; a characteristic called sexual dimorphism.
- The total length and weight of a male fisher is 35-47 inches and 8-13 lbs.
- The total length and weight of a female fisher is about 30-37 inches and 4-6 lbs.
- Fishers are normally found in heavily forested areas.
- Despite its name, fishers don't eat fish.
- Fishers are omnivores; their diet consists of both plants and animals.
- These animals are one of the few predators able to hunt and kill porcupine.
- A fisher's gestation period usually lasts for the entire year and they give birth to a litter of 1- 4 kits in spring.

Message from Lisa Hoyt,

DPEEC Director:

As a lover of all four seasons, I always have a bittersweet feeling as each season transitions along nature's cycle. I hate to see one season end, but always look forward to the next one with new outdoor activities to be enjoyed. I've enjoyed watching a large flock of Common redpolls come and go at the bird feeders this winter. And now I turn towards the light and look forward to the first red-winged black birds and skunk cabbage to appear. At the Center we have some exciting spring news to share. Summer camp registration is now in full swing .We have expanded the camp so that a child can now attend for two weeks rather than just one. Registration forms and information can be found on the website. The Friends of Dyken Pond have received two grants. The Arts Center has funded our second Community Art Program. This time you are invited to help us create a school of Folk Art Fish to be installed along the railing of Cabin 2. The Friends also received a grant from the Templeton Foundation to fund a teen Forest Adventure program for 14 – 16 year olds. Look for upcoming details on both these programs on our website and in our email distribution. You can always opt-in to our emails on our website at www.dykenpond.org . Hope you enjoy spring and remember to spend time in the outdoors!

Calendar of Events

Earth Day Volunteer Day: April 20 , 9am-12pm Trail clean-up, getting center ready for spring,

Full Moon Sounds of the Night: Friday, April 26, 7pm– 9pm Free

Bird Walk with Mary Batchellor: Saturday, May 4; 8 am \$2 donation suggested

Spring Wildflowers Folklore: Saturday, May 11 1pm—3pm Free

Fisher caught by camera trap

**Male
Fisher**



**Female
Fisher**

Note much
smaller size



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Friends of Dyken Pond Center, LTD.

Annual Report 2012

	<u>Dec 31, 12</u>
Account Balances	
Petty Cash	88.99
Sefcu Regular Savings	69.53
Sefcu Preferred Savings	22,470.66
Sefcu Checking	10,147.30
CD - 1119	824.47
Undeposited Funds	5,886.00
Total	<u>39,486.95</u>

	<u>Dec 12</u>
Allocated Funds	
Cabin 3 Restoration & Pavilion	919.29
Edward's Endowment	500.00
Equipment/Repairs	209.60
Newcomb Pond Fund	13,987.72
Land Protection Fund	4,252.75
Mosaic Art Grant	226.54
Program Donations	896.98
Program Material Fund	11,609.00
Rough Riders Program	1,902.28
RPA Funds	0.00
Scholarship Fund	585.00
SOLA	-306.63
Sylvan Way Lot 13	0.00
Volunteer Supplies Fund	500.00
Total Allocated Funds	<u>35,282.53</u>

	<u>Jan - Dec 12</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
43400 - Direct Public Support	
43450 - Individ, Business Contributions	11,473.13
43460 - RPA joint grant	26,882.40
43400 - Direct Public Support - Other	3,816.82
Total 43400 - Direct Public Support	<u>42,172.35</u>
45000 - Investments	
45040 - Bank Interest	57.68
Total 45000 - Investments	<u>57.68</u>
46400 - Other Types of Income	541.00
47100 - Fundraising Income	5,583.00
47200 - Program Income	
42750 - Tracking Series	125.00
47240 - Program Service Fees	-150.00
47260 - SOLA	2,424.30
47270 - Wild Edibles	377.00
47280 - Fire Making	185.00
47200 - Program Income - Other	30.00
Total 47200 - Program Income	<u>2,991.30</u>
Total Income	<u>51,345.33</u>

	<u>Jan - Dec 12</u>
Expense	
00011 - Internal Accounting	0.00
2 - Bank Fees	20.00
60900 - Business Expenses	50.00
62100 - Contract Services	
62110 - Accounting Fees	775.00
62150 - Outside Contract Services	180.00
Total 62100 - Contract Services	<u>955.00</u>
62800 - Facilities and Equipment	
62850 - Property Taxes	-4,846.08
62860 - Homeowners Association Fees	695.00
62800 - Facilities and Equipment - Other	10.00
Total 62800 - Facilities and Equipment	<u>-4,141.08</u>
65000 - Operations	
65020 - Postage, Mailing Service	529.45
65030 - Printing and Copying	446.78
65040 - Supplies	2,796.28
65060 - Fundraising Expenses	3,706.97
65070 - Program Expenses	2,626.76
65000 - Operations - Other	55.96
Total 65000 - Operations	<u>10,162.20</u>
65100 - Other Types of Expenses	89.59
65200 - RPA Support	26,882.40
Total Expense	<u>34,018.11</u>

Net Income	17,327.22
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**Friends of the Dyken Pond
Center**

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We're on the web!
www.dykenpond.org

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Annual winter tracking weekend event with Alcott Smith